

**NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE  
CONSTRUCTION SPECIFICATIONS**

**CONTOUR STRIPCROPPING**

**1. Scope**

The work shall consist of growing crops, forages, or fallow in a systematic arrangement of equal width strips on or near the contour as shown on the plans and/or as staked in the field.

**2. Field Layout**

The field layout will be as staked for steepness of slope, contour gradients, and strips widths.

Row grades for slow to very slow infiltration rates (soil hydrology groups C or D), or for crops sensitive to ponded water for periods of less than 48 hours, will have a positive row grade of not less than 0.2.

The maximum row grade will not exceed 2 percent or one-half of the uphill and downhill slope percent used to predict sheet and rill erosion—use whichever is less.

Up to 3 percent row grade may be used within 150 feet of a stable outlet.

The minimum ridge height will provide the equivalent protection that would be accomplished with a 0.5- to 2-inch ridge on a level contour during the period of the cropping management system most vulnerable to sheet and rill erosion. This requirement does not apply when close grown crops, such as small grains, are grown in the contour strip and the plant height will be at least 6 inches and the distance between plants will be less than 2 inches.

The minimum ridge height will not be required in those cropping management systems that maintain at least 50 percent surface cover after planting a crop.

No two adjacent strips will be in an erosion-prone condition during the year.

The maximum width of strips will be determined by Table 1.

All tillage and other cultural operations will be performed on the contour.

Strip width limit may be adjusted upward by 10 percent to accommodate widths of farm equipment.

Lay out strip boundaries as near as possible to the contour or parallel to terraces or diversions, if used in conjunction with the contour stripcropping. Farming operations will be done parallel to the strip boundaries. Adjustments may be made for farmability, provided row grades do not exceed 2 percent. 3 percent grade may be used in correction areas and entering a stable outlet for distances less than 100 feet. Areas exceeding 2 percent row grade will not be greater than 10 percent of the field.

**3. Other Requirements**

The owner, operator, contractor, and other persons shall conduct all work and operations in accordance with proper safety codes for the type of equipment and operations being performed with due regard to the safety of all persons and property.

Documentation will be completed on Form KS-ECS-19.

**Table 1**

| Slope<br>% | Critical Slope Length for Contouring |                             |                   |
|------------|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------|
|            | Critical<br>Slope                    | Max. Hillslope<br><u>1/</u> | Max.Crop<br>Strip |
|            | Length                               | Length                      | Width             |
| 1 - 2      | 400                                  | 600                         | 130               |
| 3 - 5      | 300                                  | 450                         | 100               |
| 6 - 8      | 200                                  | 300                         | 100               |
| 9 - 12     | 120                                  | 180                         | 80                |
| 13 - 16    | 80                                   | 120                         | 80                |
| 17 - 20    | 60                                   | 90                          | 60                |
| 21 - 25    | 50                                   | 75                          | 50                |

1/ Limit may be increased by 25 percent if residue cover after crop planting consistently exceeds 50 percent.